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the kind of a study that needs to be made as a preliminary to intelligent legislation. It is to be particularly recommended to stalwart conservatives who are gravely concerned with the preservation of our institutions.

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LIFE'S BASIS AND LIFE'S IDEAL. By Rudolph Eucken. English translation by A. C. Widgery. London: A. and C. Black, 1911. (Original Title, *Die Grundlinien einer neuen Lebensanschauung*.)

PRESENT-DAY ETHICS IN THEIR RELATIONS TO THE SPIRITUAL LIFE. Deem Lectures. New York, London: Williams and Norgate, 1913.

THE PROBLEMS OF HUMAN LIFE. By Rudolph Eucken. English translation by W. S. Hough and W. R. Boyce Gibson. Revised and enlarged edition. London: T. Fisher Unwin, 1914. (*Die Lebensanschauungen der grossen Denker*).¹

CAN WE STILL BE CHRISTIANS? By Rudolph Eucken. English translation by Lucy Judge Gibson. London: A. and C. Black, 1914.

ZUR SAMMLUNG DER GEISTER. Von Rudolph Eucken. Leipzig: Quelle und Meyer, 1915.

A few years ago the present writer contributed to this JOURNAL an account of the Philosophy of Eucken,² in brief compass, but, at least in intention and endeavor, definitely sympathetic. That statement was accepted, within its limits, by the distinguished German thinker as an adequate account of his essential position. At that period Eucken's work was only beginning to be generally known in the English-speaking world, mainly through the devotion and enthusiasm of Mr. W. R. Boyce Gibson. Since then much water has flowed beneath the bridge. The successive editions of Eucken's numerous and usually voluminous writings have circulated in Germany in tens of thousands; the various English translations (of which the most recent are named above) have made his name universally familiar, and have been followed

¹ The original edition of the English version of the *Lebensanschauungen* was reviewed in this JOURNAL by Mr. A. O. Lovejoy, vol. xxi, October 1910, pp. 83-88.

² See this JOURNAL, vol. xxi (October 1910), pp. 15 ff., "The Idealism of Rudolph Eucken."

up by several interesting expositions by English and American admirers. Above all, an international catastrophe, without parallel in the history of mankind, is actually in process; Eucken's philosophy of the spiritual life is brought face to face with this catastrophe, and he is forced to come to terms with the facts. The results appear in the last volume named above, not yet translated. The time has come for an estimate of a more definitely critical character; and the following paragraphs are offered as a tentative contribution to that end.³

It has been said that wherever you open Hegel you find him "saying the same thing." This is more true of Eucken than of any philosophical writer known to us. It is questionable whether his recent writings have added anything of consequence to the earlier books which made him famous, the *Lebensanschauungen der grossen Denker* and the *Geistige Strömungen der Gegenwart*. The essential message is always the same. The nineteenth century more than any other epoch brought with it an improvement of human conditions and an enlargement of the whole scope of life. One would have expected it to close with a powerful consciousness of satisfactory achievement. That it did not do so points to an error in the type of life which dominated the period. The error is one of fundamental omission or defect: a pervasive failure to grasp the need and the reality of a higher spiritual being which is at once the basis and the inspiration of life. Within ordinary human life a new depth of reality is discoverable, which cannot possibly belong to man as a merely natural being: a spiritual life which nature can give or take away as little as it can be reached or lost by theoretic investigation. The realization of this life is no mere extension, or even development, of any natural order; it opposes to the given order an altogether new life, a life which, in attaining spiritual immediacy, first discovers the true source and standard of all reality.

The vagueness besetting the summary statement, which we have just given, is also, it must be maintained, a prominent characteristic of the original writings themselves. An opaque atmosphere seems to brood over Eucken's work. This is due partly to the almost total absence of concrete illustrations and to the use of a peculiar terminology of elusive significance; but it springs ultimately from a more serious defect.

³ An important critical estimate by Mr. Bernard Bosanquet, written from the Hegelian point of view, will be found in the *Quarterly Review*, No. 239 (April 1914), pp. 365 ff. (London: John Murray.)

We fully admit that the reiteration, of which we have spoken, proves the unity and cohesion of the writer's thought; and the massive persistence with which he urges the need and the reality of a spiritual principle in life stamps it as an original philosophical achievement. The great interest shown in his work, especially among theologians, probably springs from the fact that his fundamental principle definitely excludes all forms of the Naturalism which is confidently preached, in some quarters, as the last word of science on human affairs.

The radical weakness in Eucken's philosophical position is laid bare when we require any real answer to the simple question, What is the *content* of the spiritual life? To answer this question is to trace the positive relation of the principle to the various aspects of that "world" or "nature" to which Eucken is ever setting it in opposition. The question is none the less urgent for Eucken because his conception of philosophy is akin to that of Fichte rather than to that of Hegel. Philosophy in Eucken is not, as in Hegel, purely theoretical; *i.e.*, its business is not only to understand *what is real* or is already accomplished, to "paint the grey in grey." Philosophy is practical; its conviction of the infinity of human nature and destiny involves a demand that all things shall be subdued to the higher life of man.⁴ Eucken's fundamental principle is offered as an instrument for this end. How is the instrument to be used? How does the author himself use it?

We turn to his application of it in the history of thought. The *Problem of Human Life* now appears in an enlarged English version with a number of brief appendices contributed by the author. These do not appear to add anything to the value of the treatment. The book itself is not in any sense a history of philosophy. It is a historical treatment of the problem of the spiritual life; the thinkers selected for illustrating this problem, and the treatment of their doctrine, are determined entirely from Eucken's own point of view. The result is a book of much value and suggestiveness for many purposes. How far does it answer the question as to the content of the spiritual life? The only general conclusion emerging through the treatment is that the movement of conceptual thought depends on and is determined by the larger movement of life; hence adequate appreciation of

⁴ Cp. Perry, *Present Philosophical Tendencies*, p. 164, and Boyce Gibson, *Quarterly Review*, *Ibid.*, p. 380.

the great thinkers needs not only historical and critical scholarship but also something of the nature of sympathetic insight, penetrating to the central and the essential. "So Eucken goes up and down the history of philosophy," observes Mr. Lovejoy, "looking everywhere for recognitions or denials of the power and primacy of *the inner life*." But the content of that life is not shown; only its essentially "inward" and self-sufficing character, and its independence of the merely "external," are emphasized. It is treated as though it were in itself the most fruitful of realities; but what is it?

In *Life's Basis* and *Life's Ideal* Eucken deals critically with five contemporary attitudes towards life, and argues that they fail to meet the essential human need. They are as follows: "Other-worldliness"; "Immanent Idealism," and "Intellectualism," incapable of dealing with the dark facts of sin and suffering; "Naturalism," vainly endeavoring to explain the spiritual from the non-spiritual; "Socialism," seeking to meet spiritual needs by material means, repressing originality, and reducing life to a dead level of the common-place; and "Aesthetic Individualism," which from every point of view is found to be merely superficial. The criticisms all touch real defects, and various elements of truth are recognized in these views of life. But the author does not show how these truths are to be taken up into the service of the spiritual life; the latter abides in its exaltation, purely negative in its attitude to everything concrete. In this reference, the more we study Eucken's writings the more we feel the justice of Mr. Bosanquet's verdict. We find "a certain hostility alternating with neglect towards the realm of nature below man, towards the beginnings of morals and religion in early society, towards the ethical import of institutions, and towards the greatness of Hellenism and the Middle Age. . . . Of the family, society, and the state, with their uniting mind and will and their inherent ethics and religion, we hear from Eucken hardly a word; and he has little serious study of art or religion as such."

In the volumes on Ethics and on Christianity there is little to relieve the severity of this criticism. In the former, after attacking the view of morals as based wholly on *social* relationships and needs, the author proceeds to discuss the conditions and possibilities of the "inner life" and the various means suggested for its development. Man cannot be satisfied with a mere place in "nature"; he has a sense of higher values than arise on the

merely natural field. There must be an "inversion of life" in us, directly grappling with and opposing the natural world; we become conscious of a spiritual life both in ourselves, setting up "new" moral standards, and in the Life of All, which in its totality involves the spiritual being that we come to possess when we have energetically wrought it out. In this sense man must "die to live." The "spiritual life," therefore, is for Eucken the essence of Christianity; the traditional ecclesiastical and doctrinal forms of Christianity are to be rejected.

In the last volume on our list Eucken addresses himself directly to modern Germany. Now as a simple matter of fact it must be said that Germany, and particularly Germany since 1870, affords the most extensive exemplification of those defects in nineteenth century civilization on which Eucken has dwelt, in general terms, through hundreds of pages. In modern Germany the expansion of material resources, the immense development of applied science, the methodical and even mechanical organization of things, and of men, in the service of the *Kraftideal*, manifest themselves on a scale and with a thoroughness which have compelled the admiration of the world. But what has the philosophy of the spiritual life to say to these conspicuous phenomena of modern German *Kultur*? What has that philosophy—which spoke so loftily concerning the whole realm of human endeavor manifested in the natural order of life—to say, when thus faced in the concrete with the insistent problem of the sources of a nation's greatness? Certain evils, shared by German civilization with that of other nations, are spoken of, cautiously, in an abstract way; but *in the concrete* the philosophy of the spiritual life resolves itself into a glorification of German science, German industry, German thought, German strength. There is nothing abstract, no ambiguity or vagueness here; the verdict is clear and definite, and refers to the German virtues supposed to be manifested in the whole enterprise and conduct of the present war. And so the passage through Belgium, with all that it has involved, not only was "necessary" but is a manifestation of the spiritual greatness of Germany!

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